

REPUBLICAN LOYALTY:

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A Discourse delivered on Thanksgiving Day,

NOVEMBER 29, 1860,

IN TRINITY CHURCH, WASHINGTON,

BY REV. C. M. BUTLER, D. D.,

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Vestry Room, Trinity Church, Washington, Nov 29, 1860.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR: We are sure that we only reflect the feelings of all who had the pleasure of listening this morning to your discourse upon the present unhappy state of public affairs, when we say that words so fitly spoken should not be limited to your congregation, but should go abroad over our prosperous but almost disunited land. The violent excitements of the day are indeed unpropitious to a calm hearing of the counsels of wisdom, and to the consideration of grave duties, by the citizens of our common country; but we cannot but believe that remarks so admirable and impressive would affect the hearts and judgment of others as they have our own, and help to stay the tide of fraternal strife that now threatens to engulf us. We therefore respectfully request a copy of your discourse for publication.

We are, reverend and dear sir, truly yours,

D. W. MIDDLETON,
L. D. GALE,
[Wardens.
E. L. CHILDS,
FITZHUGH COYLE,
JNO. M. BRODHEAD,

JOS. H. BRADLEY,
JOS. F. LEWIS,
WM. B. TODD,
C. B. MAURY,
WM. J. STONE, JR.,
[Vestry.

Rev. C. M. BUTLER, D. D.

Washington, D. C., December 2, 1860.

MY DEAR FRIENDS: I deeply feel that nothing which may "help to stay the tide of fraternal strife that now threatens to engulf us" should be withheld. Although, therefore, I can hope for no such extensive influence as your partiality suggests, from the publication of my Thanksgiving Discourse, yet, if at this crisis of peril, and at this center alike of national anxieties and hopes, there is reason to believe that its dissemination may contribute *anything* to that sum of restraining and conservative influence without which our great Union must be broken, it should be freely yielded. I give it to the press, therefore, with the fervent prayer that the earnest and anxious attempt to depict our dangers and duties, which met with such a hearty and general response from the listening congregation, may stir in the minds of some who read it a renewed pulsation of loyalty to our "one country and our common Constitution."

Very faithfully, your friend and pastor,

C. M. BUTLER.

D. W. MIDDLETON, L. D. GALE, &c.

DISCOURSE.

IN this capital of the country it is natural that a Thanksgiving Discourse should refer to national interests and affairs. This is not a place in which there are family gatherings of three or four generations in old homesteads, and in which the sense of general and political good is almost lost in that of personal and domestic joys. In such festive home scenes the national airs are played upon the lawn, at a distance from the house, and are only heard in occasional strains, which float through the windows into the pauses between the sacred lyrics of heart and home. In such communities, personal, domestic, social, and local blessings may form fit themes for the pulpit on Thanksgiving Day. But in this community we are made to feel so distinctly that all our other temporal blessings are interwoven with those that are national, that even our home hymns are set and sung to the tunes of the Union. You will not, then, my friends, think it strange that to-day I take a national theme for my discourse.

We call and celebrate this day as "the Thanksgiving Day." But, to use the language of the prophet, [Zech. i: 15, 16,] it is "a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm." Many wise and good men think that our nationality is about to be destroyed. How, then, can we make this a day of thanksgiving? My friends,

all the more dear to us should our nationality be, and all the more thankful should we be for its past and remaining blessings, if it is about to perish. Never is a home so dear to the hearts of its inmates as when it is seen to have caught fire, and to be in danger of destruction. Then all its rooms and furnishings are daguerreotyped upon the heart by that fire-light, and all its histories rush into the memory; then "the stone cries out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber answers it;" then intense gratitude and thanksgiving for the past become pain, and end in prayer. Even such must our gratitude and thanksgiving be to-day; for the fire is kindled in one or more of the towers of our stately National Home; and how painfully precious and sacred does that home seem as we gather about it to-day, in the fear that the fire will spread and the structure be consumed! God, in his great mercy, grant that we shall not sit in its ashes, like the Jews amid the ruins of their temple, lifting the passionate lament—"Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste!"

If throughout our country there was a strong national spirit, a predominant *United States feeling*; an enthusiastic love, veneration, and devotion for the Constitution; a habit of joyful obedience to law, as the soul's free homage to liberty; a pride in the country as a whole, and affectionate interest in the welfare of all its parts; a fervent zeal for its honor among the nations, and a readiness to sacrifice minor interests of self and section, and even of personal rights and welfare, for the greatest good of the greatest number;—if this were the prevailing character of our citizenship, all our present political difficulties could be readily adjusted. It is the absence of these feelings, in their needed prevalence and degree, and the presence of other and opposite feelings, that have caused our alienations, and constitute our danger. It is evident that our greatest and only real want is a wider prevalence of this high style of citizenship, this lofty loyalty to our one country and our common constitution.

LOYALTY! In that word I find our first and only real need, and by it I mean not a mere sentiment, or instinct, or passionate impulse, but a high principle, warm in the grasp of the enthusiastic love which clasps and wields it. It is a principle which becomes a moral passion. For a truly loyal heart loves, and feels its inner life blended with, and consecrates itself to, the justice, the right, the august power, and the fair renown which the State embodies. It is essentially a moral sentiment, and lays hold of the great ideas of right, duty, protection, guardianship, and beneficent power, which are organized into government, and which, like all other moral sentiments, rest on religious sanctions. Any thing which calls itself patriotism, or devotion to country, which is not this, in its essential spirit — which does not see and love grand moral ideas and duties organized, and become majestic by combination into a State — is some form of egotism from which no worthy citizenship can proceed.

No State can thrive and be happy, even according to its own ideas of what constitutes national prosperity and happiness, without *loyalty* of some kind on the part of its citizens or subjects. The quality of that loyalty will depend upon the ideas which the government embodies. In Turkey it will be stern fatalistic submission; in Russia, stolid, superstitious veneration for God's vicegerent; in imperial France, throbbing pride in the prosperity, pomp, science, luxury, protection, and military renown of the Government, which is itself the brilliant embodiment of the prevailing aspirations of a gay and gifted population; in constitutional and representative Sardinia and Great Britain, a cordial and proud devotion, on the part of the people, to a power which is its own, concentrated and lifted up, and robed and crowned and seated upon a throne; which wears an aspect of beneficent majesty, and which, while it consults the people's welfare and is deferential to their well considered will, yet resists their caprices, represses their passions, and punishes their crimes. Where there is *no* loyalty, but a mere enforced submission, there the people are consciously wretched; there

pent-up rage burns in every heart; and there the throne rests or rocks upon a volcano. Such *was* Naples, and such *is* Rome and Venice. Loyalty may be of a low quality, but without it no government, however despotic, can long endure.

“ The pent-up fire will heave its crust,
 The sultry skies the bolt will form
 To smite them clear; and nature must
 The balance of her powers adjust,
 Though with the earthquake and the storm.”

It is not a boast, but only a sober statement of the necessities of our position, when we say that a Republic like ours needs for its support a loyalty of a higher character than will suffice for other governments. If it embodies more completely than others—as we claim—the great ideas of justice, and more fully guarantees personal liberties and secures personal rights, and is more directly the expression of the people’s will, and more immediately under their control, then loyalty to our Government must be essentially the soul’s allegiance to great duties and ideas.

Among the expressive ceremonies of the cantons of Switzerland, there is one which most impressively inculcates the homage which should be rendered to the ideal and Heaven-consecrated State. At the opening of the assembly of the canton, two chamberlains, like those which accompany emperors and kings, in their robes and with the insignia of office, walk in procession as if waiting upon the invisible majestic republic which is supposed to be between them, and which they are appointed to honor and attend. It is to the great *idea* which this ceremony so significantly expresses that the loyalty of the Swiss is rendered. Such must all Republican loyalty be.

It must be exclusively moral homage and veneration for right and justice. It is unaided by imposing accessories of pomp and power. It is unconstrained from without, and must be therefore inwardly spontaneous. It cannot be mere submission to power; for the power and the authority

are exerted by those who at the same time obey. It cannot be traditional veneration for time-honored institutions; for our Republic is of yesterday. It cannot be a passionate personal and local attachment, like that of the Savoyard for his mountains and the Genevan for his lake; for our land touches all the zones, and stretches from sea to sea. It cannot be childlike zeal and awe for the visible majesties and splendors of State ceremonial; for ours is to the last degree bare and shabby. It is *souls'* profound loyalty and submission to a few pages of parchment called a Constitution, because the pen by which it was traced—like that in the picture of Domenichino, which was brought to St. John—came to the genius of our country, in the beak of the Eagle of Liberty, with the commission and the inspiration of the supreme imperial will of a great united nation, to indite her Gospel and her Apocalypse for the world. If we have not this feeling, then our Constitution is but a thesis, and our flag but painted bunting. "*By faith,*" if at all, living and acting faith in this revelation of liberty, and in the great truths which it reveals; by this "*faith* are ye to be *politically saved.*"

It is a question, then, which rises above even the momentous interests of the present hour, whether it is possible for our citizens to possess and exhibit loyalty of so high a temper as is needed for the proper conduct and the conservation of our institutions. Are our institutions in advance of our character in their demands upon a patriotic and self-sacrificing spirit? In a nation so free, so self-governing, so able to yield to its passions and caprices, so extended, so diversified in its interests, so little overawing in its forms, can a national spirit, a common feeling, an ardent, self-forgetting, enthusiastic regard for the honor and welfare of the country, in the whole and in all its parts, be so extensively fostered as to triumph over the inevitable permanent diversities, and the occasional collision of the interests, judgments, tastes, feelings, and habits of the various sections of which it is composed? How solemn is the thought that the present time may be pronouncing the decision of these questions for this

age, and for all future generations! Presumptuous as it would be in any other than a called and consecrated political prophet to anticipate that decision, yet the humbler task of indicating what are some of the characteristics of that high style of citizenship and loyalty which alone can save us, may not, I hope, improperly be undertaken by one who profoundly feels that the interests of the Gospel to which he is consecrated are intimately connected with the welfare of that great Union which he fervently and loyally loves. Such a course presents the advantage of avoiding topics, which, however treated, stir the passions of the hour; and, at the same time, of discussing principles which underlie every crisis of peril and of duty which may arise in all coming time.

This, then, is my theme to-day—REPUBLICAN LOYALTY. Is it a possibility and a reality? Do we possess and show it? What are its characteristics and its conditions? How can it be deepened and perpetuated? Momentous questions these—answers to some of which will be involved in the remarks which follow.

I.

Personal religion, true and strong, and so widely spread that it may shape the policy of the State and dictate its laws, is the first and most essential condition of this saving loyalty. We have seen that with us loyalty must be of that high kind which lays hold of great ideas, and gives itself to great duties, and is ready for large self-sacrifices; and that if this be not its quality, it can have here no existence. Now, nothing is plainer than that it is religion alone which can give men in masses this lofty spirit. Here and there, rare exceptional men may exhibit a spirit which looks like this, without a personal spiritual religion—but the bulk of men, never. It is precisely this power which the religion of Jesus creates, and this habit which it fosters. The Christian soul lives by faith. Its food is that bread which cometh down from

Heaven. Truth is the nutriment which makes it strong; duty the wine which makes it glad. The only thing which it believes to be interest is principle; the only gain, godliness; the true success, a right endeavor. A soul thus trained and nurtured is qualified for the high duties of Christian citizenship in a free and self-governing Republic. And by religion I mean not everything that takes that sacred name; but the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost, which makes the soul akin to God in holy justice as well as in pitying and self-immolating love. The religion of which this saving loyalty is one manifestation, is that of the soul which prostrates itself before the Cross, sinful, and rises up, divinely charged with power, to live to God, and to have an eye to Him in every duty and every enjoyment, and to be above all bribes of pelf or honor. And if it be thought chimerical to hope that the whole ship of State can ever be composed of materials such as these until the millennium, it may not be in vain to labor that these may be as the outer heart of oak, and the knotted knees, and the clamping screws, and the tenacious nuts and rivets, and the compressing bands, which shall knit together and hold in compacted unity and strength the structure in which much of light and split and worm-eaten stuff is used in the filling up and the details. Thank God, these oaks are growing in the Lord's domain; and the Churches and the Sunday Schools are forging and turning out these compacting bolts and screws!

II.

A view of the State as a divine institution, and of civil magistracy as an ordinance of God, is another needful condition of this loyal Christian citizenship. Not more distinctly are the Church and the family called God's institutions than is the State. The magistrate bears the same name as the preacher of the Gospel—"the minister of God." But because despotism has degraded this truth into the "right divine of

kings to govern wrong," Republicanism has practically discarded it. And yet it is the great truth which lies under the otherwise impious maxim, "*Vox populi, vox Dei.*" For, although organized civil society be an ordinance of God, yet the particular forms in which it exists are ordinances of man; and when a self-government of the people is established, then such a government is really divine, and the voice of the people, in its constitution and laws, being the voice of God's *institutions*, established by him that it might enact civil ordinances and laws, may, without profanity, be called His, because it is to be obeyed for the Lord's sake. We shrink from admitting the State to be divine, and its magistrates God's ministers, from the feeling that it seems to make that resistance to man's tyranny which we believe to be a duty and a right, a blasphemous rebellion and treason against God's government. But there is no ground for this feeling, For, while we grant the family to be divine, and filial obedience to be duty to God, and parental authority to be derived from Heaven, we yet do not grant that either the power or the obedience are without limitation. We admit that there may be cases of filial disobedience which shall yet be loyalty to the will of God. In like manner, the admission of the divine character of government does not draw after it the inference of the religious duty of absolute, unquestioning, and passive obedience, under any circumstances of wrong, outrage, and oppression. But it does involve the exceedingly important conclusion, that it is a *divine obligation* to obey its laws, in all cases, except those in which it is a divine obligation to disobey. This idea of divinity in the State, however constituted, which it is so difficult for a citizen of a republic to form, is that which he particularly needs in order that he may look upon the government with reverence, and regard duty to it as a divine obligation. How can there be dignity and grandeur in the State for the soul's homage, if we regard it as a mere human corporation or stock company established for temporal interests and material welfare — a thing of commercial partnership and gain? And yet this

is a common conception of the State. The Scriptures call the magistrate the "minister of God;" we call him the creature and the minister of man. The Bible says that the powers that be are *ordained of God*; we assert that they are *ordained of us*. "There is no power in rulers," say we, "but that which is entrusted to them by the people." "There is no power," says the Bible, "*but of God*." "Look to us," we say to our rulers, "and give an account to us of your use of our delegated power." "Look to me, your God," says the Almighty in his holy word, "to me, whose minister you are, attending continually on this very thing, exercising my power for good to him that doeth well, and bearing my sword not in vain against him that doeth evil." Not the less but all the more shall we see divinity in a republic, because there we see most distinctly the great ideas of right and duty and protection which belong to God's own divine administration. Now, if we see divinity in the State, it will be august and awful to our hearts, however poor and plain and small the State may be; and this will constitute to them its truest grandeur, however wide may be the sweep of its empire, and however dazzling the splendor of its power. The shekinal presence of Jehovah to the Jew was as glorious and awe-inspiring when it dwelt under the curtains and the badger skins of the tabernacle in the desert, as when it abode in the marble temple at Jerusalem, canopied with gold and cedar and vermilion. Divinity was in the State as really when it was struggling with bleeding feet across the deserts of the Revolution, as when it reached and rested on the velvet swards of peace in the promised land. Jacob rose, and, standing where there was only the bare earth and a solitary stone, exclaimed, "How dreadful is this place!" because God's presence had made it holy, and it was to him "the house of God and the gate of heaven." And even so might the little band that stood on the green sward at Jamestown, and that which shivered on the wild New England shore, have exclaimed, "How dreadful is this place!" bare and solitary though they were, because God was with them, and their

little houseless groups were *States* hallowed by the presence and sanctions of Jehovah of the nations.

Such are the most essential conditions of this lofty and saving loyalty. There are others which are subordinate, and yet exceedingly important for its increase and conservation.

III.

Not the least among them, I conceive, is *citizenship of a great country*, with a high name, and a vast power, and boundless resources, and a seemingly glorious future. To a mind trained in this land and this generation, no other than such a country would long seem worthy of its homage, its enthusiasm, and its loyalty. No narrow kingdom, as in the days of ancient Athens, in our day of diffused intelligence, can play a great part in human affairs. The States that are losing their inner national vitality and their name and influence in the world, are contracting their boundaries — as Austria and Turkey; and those whose life is increasingly vigorous within, and whose glory is in the ascendant — as Great Britain and France and Russia, are becoming colossal in their dimensions, populations, resources, and powers. The union of races into kingdoms — “the solidarity of nations” — are the watchwords of the time. The one Italian people rose up, like a sea lifted by under volcanic fires; and as the warm advancing waves of far Calabria met and mingled with the mighty masses that rolled, with “the strength of the hills” in them, from the base of the Savoy mountains, they beat impetuously against the foundation stones of the grim structure of Papal despotism, and its master turned pale and trembled as through the window he saw the shadow on the wall of the plume of the “*King of Italy*,” and heard Garibaldi shout “*Antichrist!*” It was a loyalty consecrated to Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic, that made the flash of Garibaldi’s sword more powerful than the batteries of St. Elmo, and seated him upon the world’s throbbing heart as *his* fit throne. Loyalty, in our day, to be high and fervid in

any land, must be allegiance to a great nation, with a history and influence which pervades the world. Now, it is not too much to say that this feeling of patriotic pride—this sense of participation in the common heritage of a great nation's glory—this consciousness of standing out before the world as one of its greatest and worthiest powers—this anticipation of a destiny in the future, transcending all that history gives of numbers, territorial extent, resources, and power—and, above all, this conviction that he was part of the authority to which he was himself subservient, and that it gave to him and to every citizen all the freedom that was compatible with duty;—it is not too much to say that this exultant sentiment has deepened that true loyalty which we have described, and furnished no mean substitute for it where it has been wanting. Notwithstanding the exaggerated and absurd forms which it has sometimes taken, it is yet a natural, a manly, and an honorable feeling. Who has not felt it? Who has been ashamed to feel it? For one, I never shall forget how, in a gondola at Venice, with a party of American friends, on a fête day, as we glided on, and unexpectedly, on looking up, found the flag of our country suspended and waving over us, we all started to our feet and gave lusty cheers; and how tides of national feeling, large and warm, coursed through my exhilarated spirit! And now, in a day like this, when States which have a vigorous and high inner life are also those which are imperial in their proportions, and when a worthy loyalty, and one equal to the demands of the citizenship of free communities, is fostered only for nations which have great destinies and glories in possession or in prospect—*now*, it is suggested that a patriotism which is concentrated in smaller communities and States is better and stronger than that which spreads itself over a continent and embraces millions. I do not believe it. The island of Manhattan and New Jersey were once separate States, and fierce was their zeal and loyalty, as we learn from their historian, Mr. Irving, in reference to their respective oyster beds; but I doubt whether the emotions which

swelled those doughty bosoms were larger and worthier than those with which their successors have seen an empire reaching to the Gulf of Mexico and stretching to the Pacific. I do not believe that the loyalty of a citizen of the United States, fostered and ennobled by the grandeur of their present and coming destinies, when narrowed to a single State, will be found equal to the increased demands which will be made upon its forbearance, its self-sacrifice, and its exertions. The patriotism of small States and communities, though intense, is apt to be a narrow, egotistical, spiteful, acrid thing. Interests when huddled together are more likely to come into collision and generate heat than when held in separation. The little wind which, rushing through a mountain gorge and striking an inland lake, lashes it into fury, would diffuse itself feebly over the expanse of ocean, and make only smiling ripples. Why, the little Republic of Geneva has been more violently and disastrously convulsed in ten years of its past history, with feuds and party strifes, than this great Republic has in half a century. Florence, teeming with poets, patriots, artists, scholars, and philosophers, has an admonitory history of most fierce hatreds and bloody revenges and incessant strife of factions. Would small States torn from our great Republic have a happier history? The God of history only knows. But this we know: A star which insisted upon being "lone," and left her clustered sisters, has been seen no more; and who that gazes upon the Pleiades does not remember that one is lost?

IV.

It is a corollary from this condition of a large and national loyalty, that there should be *a generous and just mutual toleration of the peculiar institutions and habits of various States and sections.* Without this, a national spirit is not possible. One portion of our citizens should not suppose that they are better and wiser, or more patriotic and unselfish than another; for in the same circumstances they would

have been the same. A citizen of Washington has opportunity to know that the essential character of American citizens from every quarter of the Republic is exceedingly similar. There are no such broad and marked diversities as obtain among the Scotch, the Irish, the Welsh, and the native English, united in one British kingdom. Then toleration for—nay, interest in—each other's peculiarities of character, condition and local institutions, should not be a difficult virtue. This point is too obvious to need elaboration. But its importance is unspeakable. If we cannot exemplify it we must be torn asunder. But the topic—a needed link in my chain of argument to show the conditions of union-binding loyalty in all times—is so painfully connected with the excitements of the present hour, that I gladly turn to more general considerations. It is less needed that the pulpit should enforce the lessons of mutual forbearance, when the solemnity of the crisis touches the lips of many of our Christian statesmen with sacred fire, and they are pleading in the spirit of the prophets to the infatuated Jews, with madly exasperated communities, to pause, forgive, forget, restore. God grant that those trumpet voices, musical and suasive with the burdens of patriotic counsel, whether of Everett in Massachusetts or of Stephens in Georgia, may not be unheard and unheeded!

V.

It is another condition of saving loyalty on the part of our citizens, that *the Government should be honorable and pure*. I do not believe that the people of this country will have a spirit of strong allegiance to the Government and its officials, if corruption be the rule and integrity the exception of its proceedings. There is a preponderating private sentiment and practice of virtue and honor in our land. Our personal moral character is, relatively to that of other nations, high. I believe—despite the vices and ~~cunning~~ *crime* which are so rampant in our crowded cities and on our wild frontiers, but

which are not necessarily the greater for being more open and flagrant — that the general moral tone of the people is constantly rising higher and higher. Never has a true spiritual religion — the hope of nations as of individuals — had freer course and been more glorified than in our day. Never has it shown itself so energetic in practical labors of love to relieve the wretched, to instruct the ignorant, and to lift up the degraded. And now, if, while the general moral tone of the community is rising, the government is becoming increasingly corrupt — if, instead of the august attributes of delegated sovereignty, occupied with the lofty and appropriate work of ministering to the development and welfare of the grandest empire history has ever dealt with — we shall find a power which has been won by bribery or trick, converted into a gigantic agency for jobs and offices, how can a high-toned and moral people regard a government which has thus degraded its great functions, with any other feelings than abhorrence and contempt? How can they feel that, if this is all that they can secure, it is worth being honored and perpetuated? Is it said that the government represents the people, and that the stream rises as high as the sources from whence it proceeds, and that therefore the people cannot despise the government, because it is *themselves* represented? Such is the theory, but not necessarily the actual working of our institutions. A government may retain its forms long after the spirit that shaped and once animated them is dead, and a new and opposite spirit sways them. Rome bore the name and wore many of the insignia of a republic, while she groaned under the despotism, iron and absolute, of the imperial rule. We may be representative in theory and form long after our rulers and representatives shall be appointed by the brawny dictators of club rooms and drinking saloons. If the character of our government be practically corrupt and low, then nothing but that elevated Christian citizenship which looks beyond the present condition and form of a State to its essential being as divine, however perverted, can discern in it anything that is to be revered. A prevailing loyalty

and veneration for the government is impossible, unless it be seen to be inflexibly honorable and uncorrupt.

VI.

It is needful also for the fostering of a reverential spirit toward our Government, that *our rulers and representatives should be, in all respects, the highest and foremost men of their times and sections.* They should be above and in advance of the several characters and classes and interests which they represent. Else they cannot worthily represent them all. Else all cannot look up to them. They stand out as the embodiments of our national character. They represent the working classes; and they should be men who know and sympathize with and honor them, and have a heart to protect, relieve, and raise them. They represent the mechanical, commercial, manufacturing, and landed interests; and they should be men who have given to these studies laborious nights and days. They represent the scholarship, the literature, the cultivation, and the Christianity of the land; and they should be scholars, gentlemen, orators, and Christians. Such were the rulers and representatives of other days. Such are some of our own time. But such are not all. Their number seems to diminish year by year. This idea of official persons as the highest and worthiest, because only thus the fit representatives and magistrates for all, seems to be dying out. Leveling—and alas! leveling *downward*—is now the cry of the ruling masses. “*Our representative, our magistrate, our judge,*” must be *one of us.* And if the “*us*” out of which he is chosen, and which he represents, be the patriots who congregate in club rooms and drinking holes, how can we expect that he should be a statesman, a patriot, a Christian, a wise counsellor, and an orator? What else should we look for but that he should yell out his hour with a disgusting and inflammatory harangue? Alas! alas! the subject tempts to satire, but calls for tears! tears such as Tully shed, when, with patriotic passion, he drove convicted Catiline from

the Senate-house. Where is it to end—this leveling downward—this enforced sinking of the representative, the magistrate, and the judge to an equality with his least advanced but controlling portion of his constituents? It is a leveling which, while it may degrade one class, does not elevate the other. It is that by which the “mountains may be brought low,” but not “the valleys lifted up.” If our condition shall become worse, instead of better, in this respect, then our loyalty will be indeed true and staunch if it maintain itself in the midst of such untoward influences.

VII.

There is still another thought which I venture to express, in the full conviction that what I thus proclaim as from the house-tops, is whispered in the ear in ten thousand closets. I believe that we need more of gravity, augustness, State splendor and ceremonial in the administration of our government, such as was manifested in the days of Washington. I believe that that great man's character was all the more revered, and his administration all the stronger, that he rode in a coach and four with outriders, and wore a velvet suit, and powdered hair, and silver buckles. I believe that the rights of men and women would be no less sacredly preserved than they are now, if hackmen were made to wipe their boots when they attend the President's levee. I would that the Presidential mansion were five times as large and sumptuous as it is, and that all our ministers of State and all our high officials were approached through a statelier ceremonial, and endowed with ampler revenues, and treated with a more visible and profound respect. And all this I would have—not because I wish myself or others to be overawed and constrained into reverence by the visible majesties of State—but from *self-respect*—from the feeling that whatever represents me personally should be decent in its appointments and expression, and that whatever represents us all, all the nation, is the agent of our combined power and will—should be more than decent—should be grave, majestic, imposing, the

fit expression of our united worth. It is a nation that is degraded when the magistracy of its choice is constrained or permitted, by its real or pretended public opinion, to go poor and bare, and to avoid those external forms of State, which all civilized nations have established, and not to venture even on so much of them as every jealous and sturdy little canton of Switzerland would be ashamed if its government did not manifest. I am aware that it is the habit of our citizens in *public* to ridicule these things, as the childish tastes and customs of nations which, possessing no real freedom, love the gaud and pomp of the power by which they are oppressed. But I know as well that it is equally their habit in private to lament their absence. For the want of more of these accessories of impressiveness in the State, our taste, our manners, and our national reverence and loyalty have deteriorated. You have observed the sort of reverent quietness of demeanor which settles on all persons who enter our Supreme Court. Much of it no doubt is due to the grave character and bearing of those venerable men; much to the high judicial duties in which they are engaged; but something also, no doubt, *to their black silk gowns*. We may indeed so multiply and overvalue and cling to forms, as to lose the true sentiments which they are intended to express; but we may also so despise them as to leave the principle which they should clothe to perish for the want of covering.

The uneasy feeling as to what the royal youth and his titled attendants who lately visited this country would think of us, was I am persuaded something better than a snobbish wish to stand well with lords. It was the vague apprehension in the presence of a represented nation, whom we honor and whose esteem we desire, and feel that we deserve, that, because of the want of due formalities and proprieties of presentation, we should not appear equal, in point of culture and character, to what we really are. It was the jealous feeling of self-respect, and a vague revelation to us of the fact, that we are deficient as a nation in those gravely regulated forms in all our constituted official action, govern-

mental and municipal, which would but justly express, in public and in the whole, what we are in private and as individuals. That visit evolved this vague feeling into a clearer conviction; and this is one of its many benefits. Ah! what a strange page in history would that be, which should record the fact, that in the same year that the heir of the British throne stood, reverently uncovered, and planted an acorn by the grave of Washington, the land of Washington was rent in twain, and that the germ that was *put in* did not *rise up* in the UNITED STATES. Oh! it cannot be! It must not be! Out of the heart of that future oak of a hundred years, we will believe shall yet be made *the chair of State* for the President of an enlarged, developed, teeming, prosperous, close-knit, homogeneous, happy UNITED STATES, before whose glories even those of Majestic Britain shall grow pale!

VIII.

The influence of a characteristic literature, song, and art, to foster a national spirit, is a topic which is most inviting, but which my expended time forbids me to discuss. Already their silent ministry has been most effective in this regard. Our historians and our poets have woven their soft invisible bands around us, the strength of which we shall not know until by disruption — ugly word for an uglier thing! — we shall feel them painfully tightening about us. Our artists are rapidly joining that band of gentle, unconscious patriots. Our national Beranger has not yet, indeed, raised his voice; but this may be the crisis which shall startle him into impassioned patriotic song. Let him come speedily! for alas! there is no modern Orphean lyre that can make the stones of the demolished Temple of Liberty float back again into their places!

Such, my friends, are some of the conditions of a renewed and deepened loyalty to our institutions, on which, I believe, their future permanence and prosperity depend. But, in the

mean time, before it can be developed, if it ever can, a nearer danger is upon us, which calls for loyalty, patriotism, magnanimity, and a subjection of personal feeling to the general good, such as — if we shall exercise them — will add new lustre to our national renown. If we pass safely through the perils of the next few months, I believe that our Union, under God, is safe and consecrated to a higher style of greatness for a hundred years than it ever yet has reached. Have we a loyalty equal to the crisis? We have had enough to surmount every other peril and complication, and why not enough for this? I have indeed shown, by implication, the reason and sources of a diminished nationality of spirit; but it would be gross injustice to ignore the vast amount of worthy, Christian, lofty, self-sacrificing citizenship that our land contains. The world never saw so much, and of so high a quality. This is my profound conviction; though it is no less my conviction that institutions such as ours will need for their conservation still more, and of a still higher temper. And it is a *crisis* such as this which calls it forth. It is a *crisis* which ennobles and exalts it. It is a *crisis* which shows us how much of it is latent in the masses in whom, as we look at them in the extravagances of party passion, we hastily conclude no spirit of self-immolating patriotism can be awakened. We know not what men are equal to, in a quickening and exalting emergency, which appeals to all that is generous in them, when we contemplate their common life and temper. Who that has seen the lax and lounging population of Naples would suppose that they were men who would storm and take Capua without a battery? And yet, when the soul of Garibaldi was breathed into them, they found that they too were heroes. I, then, for one will still be hopeful; and though I may not be able to conceive the mode in which it shall be done, I will still, I do still, hold to the conviction, on the general ground that because there is patriotism enough left to preserve the Union, *it will be preserved*. If I had no higher ground on which to base that hope, I could rest it on the rash haste of those who

are endeavoring to dissolve the Union. If "*rush*" is the proper watchword of those who inaugurate brief and bloody revolutions, "*festina lente*" is the appropriate motto of those who set themselves to the high task of reconstructing governments and fitting them for future times. "Laborers," says Whately, "who are employed in driving wedges into a block are careful to use blows of no greater force than is just sufficient." If they strike too hard, the elasticity of the wood will throw out the wedge. These workmen employed in splitting the Union, *strike too hard*—and let them look to where the rebounding wedge shall fall!

My friends, what a crisis! what a crisis! Who does not feel and wish that he could say something, or do something, for his country that would do her good! Who does not hope that—if indeed one or more of the towers of our stately national home, as I said in the beginning, has caught fire—the national, patriotic, anxious, fraternal floods of feeling let loose on this Thanksgiving Day, may, if not extinguish that fire, at least prevent its spreading further. Let us—and each in our place ~~of~~ measure, do all we can by our sober speech, our guarded temper, our fraternal spirit, our intensified convictions of the blessings of union and the unimaginable horror of severance, to promote and extend this patriotic and fraternal feeling. In the language of Burke, "When our neighbor's house is on fire, it cannot be amiss for the engines to play a little on our own!" To-day at least we sit down to a feast of unparalleled blessings. Let them be sanctified with prayer and thanksgiving: prayer to the God of nations; prayer to the great Head of the Church, whose welfare seems to us so implicated with that of this great Union; prayer for the sake of our children, for the sake of nations, for the sake of a world; prayer—importunate, incessant, confident and humble prayer—this is the greatest duty and the best hope of the crisis. My friends, few of us can *do*, but we all can PRAY at this momentous period—and this shall be better than all action and speech, however energetic and eloquent, which is prompted by passion.

Oh, that the Genius of Government could come and whisper in the ear of those who are laboring to precipitate us into revolution, some of her wise lessons! Through one of her great oracles, Montesquieu, she would need to convey a lesson no longer—weightier it could not be—than the chapter which contains only this one sentence, without note or comment: “Some savages cut down the tree in order to get the fruit.” Oh, that the Genius of History might go to them, and convey some of her solemn lessons! She would need but to take them to the prison where, on the night preceding his execution, Vergniaud—the young, the gifted, the most eloquent, the patriotic, the baffled, the disappointed Vergniaud—said to his fellow Girondists, the sharers of his generous illusions, his bitter disappointments, and his melancholy doom, “My friends, we have killed the tree by untimely pruning!”

ERRATA.

On page 15, second line from the bottom, instead of "*cunning*," read "*crimes*."

On page 22, line twenty, instead of "*place—measure*," read "*place and measure*."